

# THE **AFM** **DAILY** **No 6** **NOVEMBER 5, 2012** *Hollywood* **REPORTER**

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### AFM 2012

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# DARK POWER

CineVia's DARK POWER Starring Sean Patrick Flanery, Kristanna Loken, Chris Carmack & Morgan Fairchild will be screened for distributors at the American Film Market. The film is produced by Miguel Pagan and Irmgard Pagan John Milton Branton directs from a script written by Alberto G. Rodriguez and Miguel Pagan based on a story written by Miguel Pagan. SPOTLIGHT PICTURES is the film's sales agent.



# THE Hollywood REPORTER

NOVEMBER 5, 2012

## BREAKING NEWS

TomCat Films Does *Trailerific* Promotion With YouTube

*Cockneys vs. Zombies* Wins Big at Toronto After Dark Genre Fest

John Cusack Developing Rush Limbaugh Biopic

SEE THR.COM/AFM FOR FULL STORIES

AFM  
No. 6

## AFM Sales Slow but Steady

By Scott Roxborough

**B**UYERS WHO GORGED themselves in Berlin, Cannes and Toronto arrived at AFM with less of an appetite than in previous years and seemed content to pick over the market's offerings without feeling the need to dig in.

The traffic in the halls and offices of the Loews Hotel was noticeably down from last year as international distributors griped about lack of big titles on offer.

"I definitely think there are fewer films out there — fewer big-budget movies, fewer action-packed films and less volume, full stop," said Alex Walton of Exclusive Media. "People bought

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

## Minogue, Arterton Join *Sunshine*

By Pamela McClintock

**K**YLIE MINOGUE AND Gemma Arterton are set to star in 3D 1980s musical *Walking on Sunshine* for the U.K.'s Vertigo Films.

IM Global has sold the movie in a slew of key territories, including SquareOne in Germany, Gaga in Japan, Eagle in Italy, Paradise/MGN in Russia, Entermode in South Korea, Nordisk in Scandinavia, Impuls in Switzerland, Applause in Taiwan and Golden Scene in Hong Kong.

Vertigo holds U.K. rights.

"Distributors are responding to the film's irrepressible feel-good factor and 1980s nostalgia," IM Global CEO Stuart Ford said.

Max Giwa and Dania Pasquini, directors of British indie hits *StreetDance 3D* and *StreetDance 2*, are directing the film.

*Walking on Sunshine*, set to pop

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

## Douglas-Keaton Pic *And So It Goes* a Hit

The film from Rob Reiner's Castle Rock Entertainment and Foresight Unlimited is one of several high-profile projects at AFM targeting older moviegoers By Pamela McClintock and Scott Roxborough

**A**S AUDIENCES GRAY around the world, projects aimed at baby boomers are a hot commodity.

One of the top sellers at the American Film Market this year is *And So It Goes*, starring Michael Douglas and Diane Keaton. P.J. Hogan (*My Best Friend's Wedding*, *Muriel's Wedding*) will direct from a script by Mark Andrus (*As Good as It Gets*).

Foresight Unlimited, which is

financing and producing *And So It Goes* with Rob Reiner's Castle Rock Entertainment, has closed a raft of deals for the project.

Reiner is on hand at AFM to promote the movie and meet with foreign buyers.

In *And So It Goes*, Douglas will play Oren, a self-centered and eccentric realtor whose life is turned upside down when his estranged son suddenly drops off a granddaughter he never knew. With

the help of his determined and lovable neighbor, Leah (Keaton), Oren stubbornly learns to care — and, unexpectedly, to fall in love again.

"The important demographic for moviegoing has shifted," said Foresight's Mark Damon, adding that the movie will begin shooting in the spring. "Young people have too many other diversions. It is the older generation that goes to the movies."

Castle Rock's Alan Greisman

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



AFI REVIEW

## Rise of the Guardians

Alec Baldwin, Hugh Jackman, Isla Fisher and Chris Pine voice a lively but derivative 3D storybook spree for some unlikely action heroes

By Todd McCarthy

**A**VERY ODD ASSORTMENT OF MYTHICAL childhood figures, some of them afflicted with severe emotional insecurities and inferiority complexes, are thrown together as an unlikely set of action heroes in *Rise of the Guardians*, an attractively

designed but overly busy and derivative mishmash of kid-friendly elements.

A sort of *Justice League* or *Avengers* equivalent made up of the fearsome team of Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, the Tooth Fairy, the Sandman and Jack Frost, this final DreamWorks Animation production set to be distributed by Paramount will play in a predictably agreeable and profitable fashion to small fry but will skew young despite the presence of an excellent voice cast. The world premiere took place Oct. 10 at the Mill Valley Film Festival in advance of the Nov. 21 commercial bow.

Based on the book series *Guardians of Childhood* by

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

## Good Films Launches Film Slate

By Scott Roxborough

**G**OOD FILMS, THE production operation run by U.K. indie producer Miriam Segal, has launched a new slate of six midbudget movies, which it will develop and finance together with its new packaging and development arm George Films.

The projects include *What I Loved*, based on the award-winning novel by Siri Hustvedt; crime story *The Postcard Killers*, adapted from the book by James Patterson and Liza Marklund; spy drama *The Infiltrator*; the Africa-set political drama *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun*; the femme-leaning comedy *The F\*\*K It Button*; and *Invisible*, an adaptation of the play by Croatian writer Tena Stivicic.

George Films has raised a \$3.2 million fund to develop the projects. The first to go into production will be *Invisible*, which is set to start shooting in April. **THR**



# Flight Soars in Domestic Bow

**Moviegoing is solid in Northeast as families look for relief from Sandy; Cloud Atlas sputters**

By Pamela McClintock

**T**HE NORTH AMERICAN BOX office brought mixed news this weekend for films looking to boost their future international prospects with a strong domestic start.

On the positive side, Denzel Washington drama *Flight* overperformed in its domestic bow, opening to \$25 million from 1,884 locations. The prestige pic from Paramount was directed by Robert Zemeckis.

Late last week, Sierra/Affinity announced it is selling *Flight* for Paramount in select territories. Sierra already has concluded deals with StudioCanal for Germany and German-speaking Switzerland and with Tri Pictures for Spain and Spanish-speaking Andorra.

Paramount is mounting an aggressive awards campaign for *Flight*, with Washington considered a front-runner for a best actor Oscar nomination. More and more, international audiences are paying attention to America's awards season, and films with a high profile can enjoy additional attention at



Washington's *Flight* overperformed over the weekend.

the foreign box office.

At the other end of the spectrum is *Cloud Atlas*, the sweeping drama directed by Tom Tykwer and Andy and Lana Wachowski.

The independently produced epic fell 45 percent in its second weekend of play in North America to an estimated \$5.3 million. *Cloud Atlas'* domestic cume is \$18.3 million, and box-office observers believe it might have a tough time hitting \$30 million in North America.

That puts intense pressure on the film's international performance. *Cloud Atlas*, which cost \$100 million to produce, opened in previews in Russia and other Eastern European countries on Nov. 1, but numbers weren't immediately available. A Company is distributing the film in Russia in association with 20th Century Fox.

"Of course the U.S. release was disappointing, but it hasn't changed

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

## Hong Kong Sales Reps Mining the Past

**Sellers score as they hawk remastered classics, obscure gems and exploitation** By Clarence Tsui

**W**HILE HONG KONG SALES REPS BUSY themselves trading their current and future output, the past — in the form of remastered versions of catalog titles — has proved an equally profitable sideline for them at AFM this year.

Media Asia, for example, has been doing brisk business with the 1992 film *Twin Dragons*, an action comedy with Jackie Chan playing a pair of very different siblings who had their identities swapped by mistake.

Ricky Tse, Media Asia's head of distribution and sales, said he's "surprised" by the enthusiasm for the 20-year-old title. "Maybe it's Jackie's appeal," he said, adding that the company began negotiations at Cannes.

Television rights deals already have been struck for France, Russia and Turkey, Tse said, and a handful of Japanese parties have shown interest. The company also has confirmed contractual details with a mainland China distributor.

"Buyers have renewed their licenses for old films before, but as many TV stations are in HD mode, they need a copy of the film with improved image quality," he said.

Tse said the *Twin Dragon* pitch is more like a sideline on Media Asia's slate. Its major projects at AFM are Peter Chan's martial arts epic *The Guillotines*, Johnnie To's suspense comedy *Blind Detective* and the

international caper *Switch*.

Another Hong Kong company, Star Alliance, considers its catalog sales an important part of its work at the market. Making its debut at the market, Star Alliance — a subsidiary of a mainland company of the same name — has brought 20 digitally remastered films and 50 HD upgrades to Santa Monica, said senior distribution manager Lammy Li.

These titles are part of the company's vault of 100-plus independently made Chinese-language films produced from the 1970s to 2000s acquired during the past two years. The company entered into international all-rights deals with the individual producers for nine of those movies, Li said.

TV and video rights have been sold to France (Spectrum, 15 action films), Thailand (Jiant, 30 actioners, drama and erotica) and Malaysia (Transmedia, four films including two Brigitte Lin melodramas).

Star Alliance's lineup also includes such new films as the Taiwanese undead flick *Zombie 108*; Hong Kong horror film *The Incredible Truth*, currently in postproduction and starring Christy Chung as well as Japanese actors Denden (*Cold Fish*) and Megumi Kagurazaka (*Guilty of Romance*, *The Land of Hope* — both directed by her real-life husband Sion Sono). **THR**

## Freestyle Picks Up InaPPropriate

By Pamela McClintock

**F**REESTYLE RELEASING HAS nabbed North American rights to *InaPPropriate Comedy*, starring Adrien Brody, Lindsay Lohan, Michelle Rodriguez and Rob Schneider.

News of the domestic acquisition comes as Highland Film Group shops the project to foreign buyers at AFM.

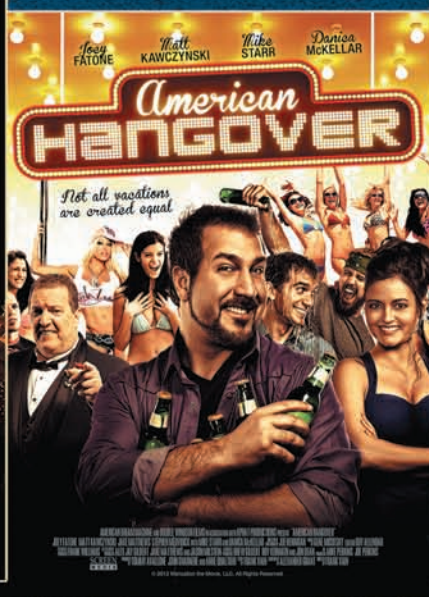
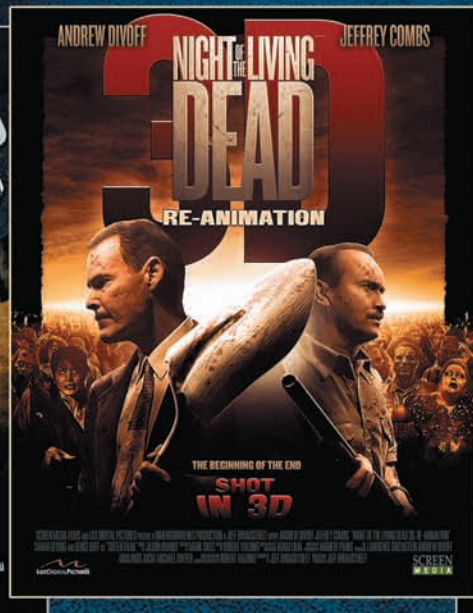
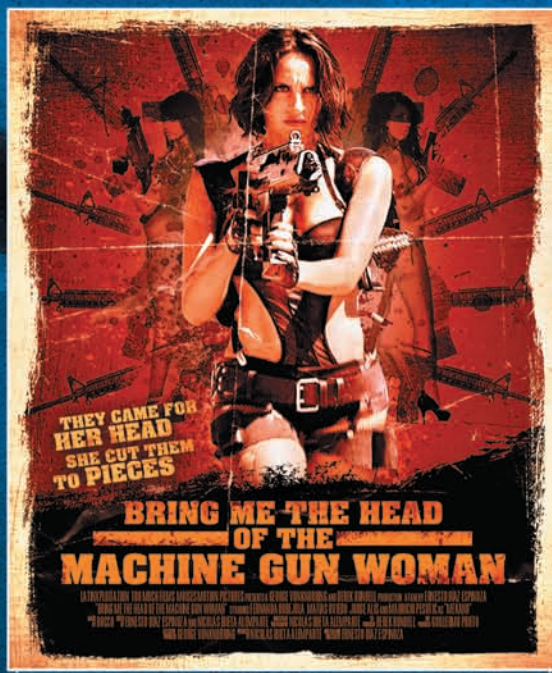
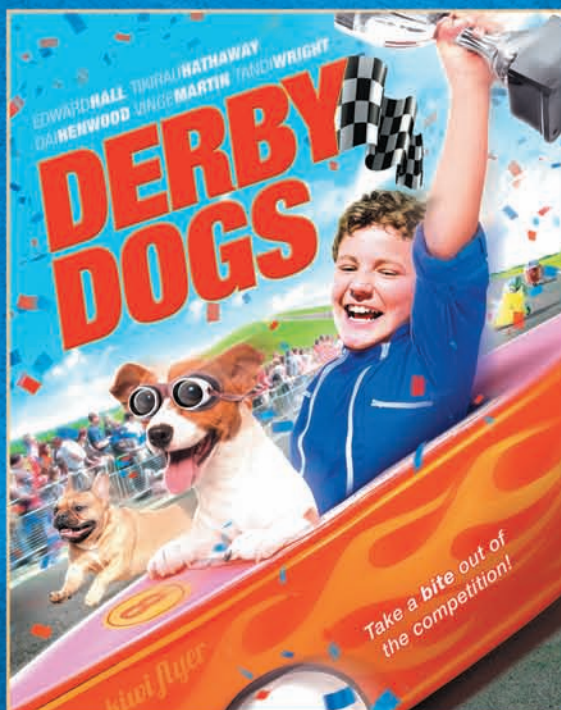
Freestyle is planning a North American theatrical release for the sketch comedy, followed by a DVD and VOD release via Freestyle Digital Media.

Directed by Robert B. Shapiro, *InaPPropriate Comedy* stars Brody as Flirty Harry, a tough, no-nonsense cop; Lohan as a woman taking revenge on the paparazzi who haunt her; and Schneider in a dual role as both a sleazy psychologist and a curmudgeonly porn critic. **THR**



# SCREEN MEDIA

# AFM 2012 LINE UP



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Frances Ha will be coming to France and Benelux.

## Frances Ha Secures Multiple Deals

By Clarence Tsui

**C**ELLULOID DREAMS HAS scored multiple deals for the Noel Baumbach-Greta Gerwig comedy *Frances Ha* and the musical drama *Greetings From Tim Buckley*, as well as presales for a neo-Western starring Kurt Russell, Kiefer Sutherland and Jennifer Carpenter.

Making its market debut at AFM, *Frances Ha* has been sold to France (Momentum) and Benelux (A-Film), with Celluloid Dreams still considering multiple offers from Britain, Scandinavia, Japan and Korza.

"When the film premiered at Toronto, it didn't have a domestic deal and sales agent, and afterward everyone wanted it, so we are very lucky," said the French reps' president, Hengameh Panahi.

Starring Penn Badgley and Imogen Poots, *Greetings From Tim Buckley* was sold to Icon for Australia and Golden Scene for Hong Kong. Celluloid Dreams is wrapping up a deal for the U.S. and Canada.

Celluloid Dreams also has inked deals with Wild Side (France) and Transmission (Australia) for *The Bone Tomahawk*, a Western from writer-director S. Craig Zahler. Shooting will begin in New Mexico in the spring.

As for Celluloid's non-English-language slate, Takeshi Kitano's Venice entry *Outrage Beyond* sold to Magnolia in the U.S. and May-win in Russia. **THR**

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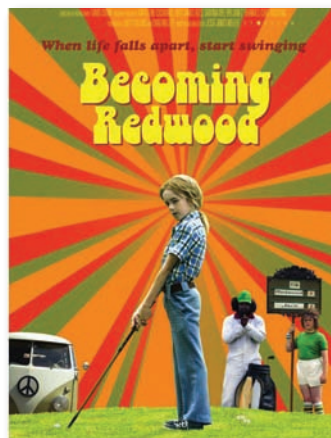
## The 2012 AFM Poster Awards

THR pays tribute to the most amusing and over-the-top promotional materials from the sixth day of the market



### BEST ARGUMENT FOR THE ROMNEY/RYAN STUDENT LOAN CUTS *Disorientation*

Rarely has a college-sex-comedy poster been so fully realized in its lowest-common denominator appeal. Framed by two bodacious, if faceless, coed hotties we have our cast: emblematic of American campus diversity with the nerd and the four wholesome-looking WASP-y kids with slightly different tastes in T-shirts. There's the goat — promising hilarious zoophilic hijinks — and a tag line that goes a long way toward explaining why the U.S. economy is unlikely to recover anytime soon.



### BEST GOLF FILM ON ACID *Becoming Redwood*

Apparently a *Legend of Bagger Vance* for the psychedelic crowd, this poster is equal parts groovy and way too square. We're digging the *Magical Mystery Tour* pinwheel, the VW bus and the caddy with the Afro. But on a golf course? There wasn't the kind of grass Pete Toshi was singing about! It's Don't Bogart Me, man, not Don't Bogey Me.



### BEST SHAMELESS PILE UP OF HEART-TUGGING IMAGERY *Old 587: The Great Train Robbery*

Can a poster ever go wrong with the combo of cute dog, old red barn and corn-dog plot premise (here involving, we think, a dog pining for the good-old days of steam locomotion)? A poor-man's Lassie, no doubt, but with monkey movies not moving this AFM, its up to Sparky here to kick-start the key animal adventure demographic.



### THE "THAT'S WHAT HE'S BEEN DOING SINCE SUDDENLY SUSAN GOT CANCELLED" AWARD *Bad Kids Go To Hell*

A film that dares to imagine what would have happened to Judd Nelson if, after he left *The Breakfast Club*, strode across the football field and defiantly thrust his fist skyward to the sounds of Simple Minds, turned around, went back to school and became a sadistic headmaster to a bunch of snotty rich kids. Who get detention. And then get killed. Just like in *The Breakfast Club*. Without the killing part.

## German Sales Still Steady as Europe Dips

By Scott Rocborough

**T**HE EUROPEAN MARKET might be falling apart — with Greece gone, Spain slipping and Italy sick — but the German industry seems as healthy as ever, judging by the slate of prebuys signed at AFM by Teutonic distributors.

While German buyers griped about a lack of big films on offer at the market — bidding wars were nowhere to be seen — top new projects can continue to rely on Europe's economic powerhouse for a healthy piece of their financing pie.

Telepool scooped two high-profile prebuys at the market: P.J.Hogan's best-ager comedy *And So It Goes*, starring Michael Douglas and Diane Keaton, from Foresight Unlimited, which will produce the film together with Castle Rock Entertainment, and Phoenix Pictures' *Absolutely Anything*, a sci-fi animated comedy from Terry Jones that will reunite Monty Python alums John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Michael Palin and Eric Idle.

Wild Bunch locked down German theatrical and video rights to Rob Reiner's new psychological thriller *You Belong to Me*, pairing with public broadcaster ZDF Enterprises to bow the title in Germany. The *Cape Fear*-style drama stars Harrison Ford and Zac Efron and will be Reiner's first thriller since *Misery* (1990).

In other German buys, Munich-based SquareOne picked up Stephen Frears' in-production comedy *Philomena*, starring Judi Dench and Steve Coogan, from Pathe and the '80s-inspired musical *Walking on Sunshine* from IM Global.

Universum/RTL were believed to be circling the Steve Brill-directed comedy *Walk of Shame* featuring *The Hunger Games* actress Elizabeth Banks, which Lakeshore Entertainment is selling.

But it wasn't a German feeding frenzy. Constantin Film, one of the territory's biggest buyers, is heading home without a major AFM buy and, late into the market, Tele-Munchen Group also had yet to sign a big check. **THR**



## AFM Sales

CONTINUED FROM 1

a lot at Cannes and at Toronto; many buyers have full slates and don't need another movie. But people are still here looking for movies and are ready to pay the right money for them."

Walton and other sellers noted that they had toned down their expectations in light of the sagging European market.

"With the European economy still in bad shape, we could only count on the more established territories like France, Germany or England," said Ricky Tse, head of distribution and sales at Hong Kong's Media Asia. "Italy's not looking well, and the Greeks have basically disappeared."

But there were some buzz titles: Anything targeting the 50-plus "best agers" market with an A-list cast was hot; see the global sales success of Al Pacino-Jeremy Renner starrer *Imagine* from Mr. Smith Entertainment or Foresight's *And So It Goes* with Michael Douglas and Diane Keaton. And distributors looking for the next teen fantasy franchise — now that *Twilight* is wrapping up and the remaining *Hunger Games* films



Pacino



Keaton



Douglas

have sold out worldwide — scoured the market for promising titles.

But there was little on offer. Mr. Smith's *The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones* sold out before AFM kicked off, and the Inferno's project *The Fallen*, based on Lauren Kate's hit teen fantasy novels about fallen angels and forbidden love, had nothing to show except the book, with no script, director or cast attached.

Incompletely packaged projects abounded at AFM this year, from Alcon's brainy sci-fi film *Transcendence*, which Johnny Depp is in negotiations to star in but doesn't have a start date, to the untitled

high-concept "teens vs. aliens" feature which Sony Pictures will produce and Good Universe is selling but which has nothing but the concept to sell.

"There are an extremely large number of films where the script isn't finished or there's no cast or director in place," said Martin Moskowitz, head of film and TV at German mini-major Constantin Film. "Projects are being shown at a stage where, in the past, they would have held back till Berlin or Cannes."

*Clarence Tsui contributed to this report.*

## And So It Goes

CONTINUED FROM 1

added: "There's a large demographic and need for these kind of films as evidenced by box-office successes such as *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*, *It's Complicated* and *Bucket List*. Diane and Michael are Hollywood legends who will shine in this hilarious and heartfelt story."

Greisman will produce alongside Reiner and Damon. Executive producers include Foresight's Tamara Birkemoe and Grant Cramer.

Other popular AFM projects that cater to older audiences include the JFK assassination drama *Parkland*, starring Paul Giamatti, Billy Bob Thornton and Jacki Weaver, and *Imagine*, starring Al Pacino as an aging rock star. *Imagine* also stars Jeremy Renner and Julianne Moore.

Exclusive Media is selling Playtone's *Parkland*, while Mister Smith Entertainment has closed a number of deals for *Imagine*.

Insiders say there were bidding wars for *And So It Goes* in a number of territories. The film went to Telepool in Germany, MGN Paradise in Russia, Hoyts in Australia, Impuls in Switzerland, Trippictures in Spain, Playarte in Latin America, Eone in Benelux, Scanbox in Scandinavia, Freeman in Eastern Europe, Freeman in Eastern Europe, Tanweer in India, SSG in Taiwan and PT Amoro in Indonesia.

Foresight says other deals are imminent. **THR**

## Noori Pictures Takes *Saving General Yang*

By Clarence Tsui

**P**EGASUS MOTION PICTURES HAS SOLD THE distribution rights to the new Ronny Yu (*Fearless*, *Bride of Chucky*) martial arts actioner, *Saving General Yang* to Vietnam.

Noori Pictures inked a deal with the Hong Kong shingle Sunday for the film, a Hong Kong-mainland China co-production based on the legend of a clan of 11th century generals who fought for the Song dynasty against an invasion by the Liao state from the north.

The film's screening rights for the U.K., Germany, Switzerland and Australia already have been sold to Universal Pictures International Entertainment, with deals for Singapore, Taiwan, Australia and Thailand also completed.

The shingle, established by Raymond Wong (formerly of New Cinema City and Mandarin Films, whose son Edmond wrote *Saving Private Yang*), is also fronting two new 3D projects.

In postproduction is the third film on the martial arts master *Ip Man*, with Donnie Yen reprising his role, and horror film *Baby Blues*, a return to Chinese-language feature-directing for 24 years for Leong Po-chi. **THR**



*Saving General Yang*



*Cloud Atlas*, with Susan Sarandon and Jim Broadbent, fell 45 percent in its second weekend.

## Box Office

CONTINUED FROM 2

our release plans," A Company topper Alexander van Dulmen told *The Hollywood Reporter* earlier last week. "*Cloud Atlas* has a more intellectual approach, and the European audience is more open to movies where you have to think a bit."

Van Dulmen points to Tom Tykwer's *Perfume: The Story of a Murderer* as an example of how a film judged too art house for the U.S. mainstream market can be global hit. The 2006 period drama earned just \$2.2 million in limited release in the U.S. but upward of \$130 million internationally, including a hefty \$53 million in Germany and more than \$9 million in Russia.

Barry Levinson's eco-thriller *The Bay* — an IM Global title — disappointed in its North American debut, grossing \$21,429 from 23 theaters for a tepid average of \$932. Roadside Attractions is distributing the film domestically.

*Scott Roxborough contributed to this report.*

## Sunshine

CONTINUED FROM 1

hits from the 1980s, takes place in present-day Spain in a beautiful coastal village. Amanda is getting married to Raf and has invited her sister, Taylor, to the wedding. Unbeknownst to Amanda, however, Raf is Taylor's ex-holiday flame, and the love of her life.

IM Global's slate also includes *The Butler*, headlining Forest Whitaker, *Dead Man Down*, starring Colin Farrell and Noomi Rapace, *Welcome the Punch*, starring James McAvoy, and *Before Midnight*.

*StreetDance 3D*, released in 2010, earned north of \$17 million. It was a production of Vertigo in association with BBC Films. **THR**





## FRANÇOIS OZON

**The playful French auteur talks about the “game of cinema,” sleeping through Hitchcock’s *Rear Window* and why he considers his audience monsters** By Scott Roxborough

**F**RANÇOIS OZON OCCUPIES A unique position in European and world cinema. Less an *enfant terrible* than an impish rascal, he is a master of defying audience expectations and playing with genres, whether it’s the musical-cum-murder-mystery of *8 Women* (2002), the thriller-meets-sex-comedy of *Swimming Pool* (2003) or the social drama combined with Disney-esque fantasy of *Ricky* (2009).

In his new film, *In the House*, Ozon again proves himself a master manipulator, adapting a play by Juan Mayorga about a problematic relationship between a literature professor and his ambitious, if morally suspect, student. The result is somewhere between psychological thriller, social commentary and a high-minded intellectual meta fiction.

Ozon spoke with *The Hollywood Reporter* about the games he plays with his audience, how reality TV

is changing our world and about sleeping through *Rear Window*.

**What was it about Juan Mayorga’s play that inspired you?**

I think the first thing that inspired me and that I liked in the play was the relationship between the teacher and the student. I belonged to a family of teachers. I remember seeing my parents correcting papers over the weekend and all the problems with the students, with their bosses. I know this milieu. So it was the first thing that struck me. And afterward, what I really liked is that I thought that with this story I could talk about the process of writing, of creating, in a very playful way. I could make an entertaining film that could also speak in some depth about my process of working.

**Can you describe that process? For example, how did you adapt this play for the screen?**

It took me a long time to know how to adapt it. When you adapt a play, or a book, I think you have to betray the author. You have to take what you like and do your own business on it. So I took what I liked from the play to tell my own story.

**A big theme of the movie is the relationship between the author and his audience. How do you view your audience?**

Monsters! All of them! But I’m part of that audience too. I am a cinephile; I love to watch movies. But I know movies are about manipulation. It’s a deal between the audience and the director. When you go to a film of a director you like, you accept his world, his way of telling the story. That’s the deal. The experience of cinema is very strange. We are in the dark, watching fantasies flicker past on the screen. I wanted to convey something about that — about the relationship between the audience and the writer, the artiste. For me it’s a game. You have to play with the audience’s expectations. To give them what they want, or not. To play with the genre of cinema. You know, you can give the feeling it will be a thriller and then actually it is a melodrama. It will be a comedy or maybe not so much. You have to create space for the game because to me cinema is a game. It’s fun, it’s entertainment, you have to deal with all these things.

**Is that why you always work within the framework of a specific genre, even if you then play with that genre?**

Yes. I try to put the spectator in the art of the creation. When you are writing something, you don’t know where you are going, where it will end. You try different things, going one way, then the other. I wanted to put the audience in the middle of this process, so they could make their own film too. It’s funny; I did a screening in France and people told me afterward, “I thought the teacher would kill his wife or the wife would have sex with the pupil” — all sorts of different movies! But actually,

my subject isn’t so much what will happen but more how it will happen, how you portray the facts. In the end, the film is about the relationship between the teacher and the student.

**One thing you do, deliberately, in this film is tell the audience, “This is a story we are making up.” It’s a risky move.**

That was the challenge of the film; it is a meta film, as we say — a film about making films. I wanted to do that but play with it in a very light way. The original play was very intellectual, very theoretical. I tried to make it funny and light without losing the depth. To play on several levels. For me, a good film needs to have different levels and can be read several ways.

**The student’s stories about his family that his professor obsesses over have the air of a reality TV show. Was that deliberate?**

Yes, of course. I think “reality” is the big obsession in film and particularly TV right now. Everyone is watching these reality TV shows where you know everything about the people. There are no more secrets, there is no more mystery, and I wanted to play with that. I think the fascination of the couple with the pupil’s family is exactly that. They pretend to be intellectual, but actually they want to know all the details of what’s happening in the bedroom of this middle-class family. It’s the same with our fascination with reality TV. Everyone says it’s cheap, but everyone is watching. We can be fascinated by the banality, people’s very ordinary life. It is something very modern, very much of today. But I’m not judging. This is part of the society of today. You have to deal with it. I think there is a kind of ambiguity of the artist. They want to be famous, so they have to give up some of their privacy. It isn’t good, it isn’t bad. It’s more complex than that.

**Watching the movie, I was reminded very much of Hitchcock, particularly *Rear Window*.**

You aren’t the first person to mention that, but I must admit, I slept through *Rear Window*. The only time I saw the film, I hadn’t slept the night before, and I dozed off. So I remember a few extracts, but I have never seen the entire film. Maybe I dreamt my version of *Rear Window* while I was sleeping, and this is the film! **THR**

### Vital Stats

**Nationality** French

**Born** November 15, 1967

**Film in AFM** *In the House*

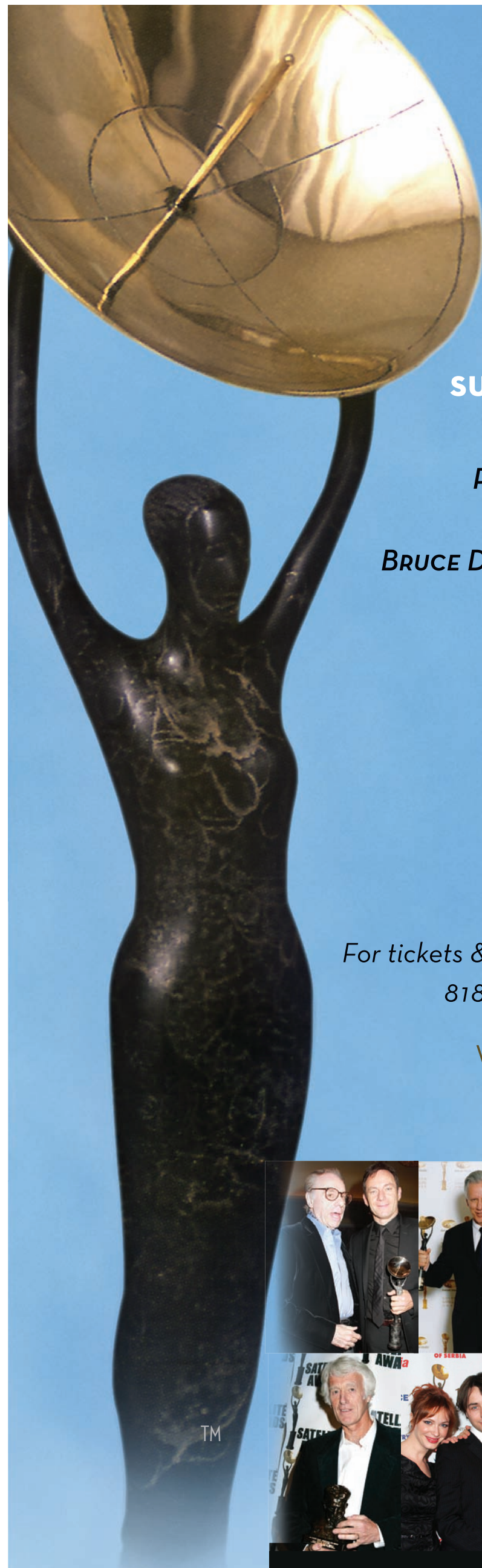
**Selected Filmography**

*Under the Sand* (2000), *8 Women* (2002),

*Swimming Pool* (2003), *Potiche* (2010)

**Notable Awards** Berlin Silver Bear, European Film Award, Lumière Award, NBR Award for *8 Women*; BAFTA, Cesar and European Film Award Nomination, *Potiche*; European Film Award, Caesar Nomination, *Swimming Pool*





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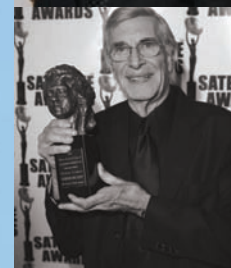
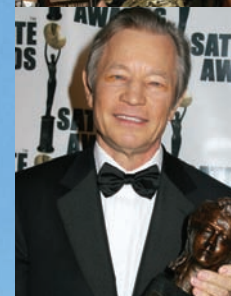
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# Rise of the Guardians

CONTINUED FROM 1

William Joyce, as well as on the author's short film *The Man in the Moon*, the script by David Lindsay-Abaire (*Robots*, *Rabbit Hole*) plays fast and loose with these legendary fixtures of childhood, attaching to them all sorts of neuroses, feelings of inadequacy and the sense, or threat, of being ignored. Some might find this tack delightfully mischievous, but it's just as easy to reject as ridiculous the notion that Jack Frost — a free spirit very much like Peter Pan who can fly around anywhere he wants — suffers from an emotional trauma he suffered hundreds of years earlier.

Perhaps the most readily amusing of the gang is Santa, or, as he is more geographically named here, North. A muscular powerhouse rather than a fatso, North has heavily tatted forearms and, as wonderfully voiced by Alec Baldwin, sports a distinctive Russian accent not inappropriate to the proximity of that country to his palatial mountainside workshop. Also gathering here are the rangy and rascally E. Aster Bunnymund (an excellent Hugh Jackman), the hummingbird-like Tooth (or Tooth Fairy, delightfully rendered by Isla Fisher), the mute and tubby spinner of gold Sandman and, ultimately, Jack (a fine Chris Pine), who has wandered

the globe alone for centuries and feels woefully unrecognized compared to the others because he has no special day or occasion to make an imprint on the lives of children.

All the same, Jack is hard-pressed by North to join in the battle against Pitch (as in pitch black), a diabolical figure (plausibly acted by Jude Law) who, after a long absence, has returned to throw Earth into darkness and provide much-needed nightmares to kids everywhere. As with Jack, Pitch's re-emergence feels arbitrary and generic, while the tall, sneering and stubby-toothed figure bears far too close a resemblance to *Harry Potter's* Voldemort, as do his minions, black steeds that disintegrate into fragments and flash through the sky almost identically to Death Eaters. So while Jack tries to sort out his issues of neglect (kids in small-town America don't even notice him) and struggles over whether or not to join the others, the battle against the lord of the night commences.

Director Peter Ramsey, a long-time storyboard artist making his feature directorial debut after beginning with the 2009 telefilm *Monsters vs. Aliens: Mutant Pumpkins From Outer Space*, never misses a chance to throw in one more



A group of legendary fixtures from childhood act quite differently from how we remember them.

roller-coaster-like visual ride to pump up the 3D experience. But the characters and settings are attractively designed, and the vocal performances have real color and a sense of fun that gently undercuts the treacly sincerity of certain obligatory kid-pandering moments.

Composer Alexandre Desplat really gets a workout here, dextrously blanketing the film with ever-changing tempos and motifs to suit the moment and propel the action. At least 10 percent of the 97-minute running time is devoted to the end credits.

Originally reviewed at the Mill Valley Film Festival

Opens Wednesday, Nov. 21 (Paramount)

Production DreamWorks

Animation SKG

Voice cast Chris Pine, Alec Baldwin, Jude Law, Isla Fisher, Hugh Jackman, Dakota Goyo

Director Peter Ramsey

Screenwriter David Lindsay-Abaire, based on the Guardians of Childhood book series by William Joyce and *The Man in the Moon*, a Reel FX short film directed by William Joyce

Producers Christina Steinberg, Nancy Bernstein

Executive producers William Joyce, Guillermo del Toro, Michael Siegel

Production designer Patrick Marc Hanenberger

Visual effects supervisor David Prescott

Editor Joyce Arrastia

Visual consultant Roger Deakins



A glamorous gang of thieves is after a yellow diamond worth a cool \$30 million.

# The Thieves

Acrobatic action, amusing characters and an exotic pan-Asian setting make a top-grossing combo in Choi Dong-hoon's lighthearted heist film

By Deborah Young

**A** SPARKLING HEIST FILM TRICKED UP with imaginative action scenes and 10 fully developed characters who keep the ball rolling, *The Thieves* is a stylish and entertaining caper in spicy Asian sauce. Dubbed South Korea's answer to *Ocean's Eleven*, the story does

indeed revolve around a daring casino theft and a playful band of robbers, in this case all ace criminals. Directed by heist meister Choi Dong-hoon (*The Big Swindle*, *Tazza: The High Rollers*) and featuring a swinging A-list cast, it has become the most-watched Korean film of all time.

Apart from generating a great deal of romantic chemistry, the glamorous cast of characters are as fast with barbed wit as they are nimble on their feet or, as case may be, flying through the air, climbing up the side of a building or dangling by wires. The fact that each of them is memorably individualized marks a tribute to Choi and Lee Gi-cheol's carefully penned screenplay, as well as the all-around acting talent.

A small caveat: The plot unfolds at the speed of light, and the viewer needs to be very quick-witted to follow it, though this isn't Shakespeare and missing out on a few story points won't diminish the fun. Ringleader Popeye (Lee Jung-jae of *The Housemaid*) tells the group a big new caper is planned in Macau with a band of thieves from Hong Kong. Although they know each other from previous jobs, the Korean and Chinese gangs immediately flare up over the presence of ace Korean safe-cracker Pepsi (Kim Hye-soo), a woman who once had an affair with

the Chinese honcho, Macau Park (Kim Yun-seok). Macau has the insider info needed to run the show, thus displacing Popeye as leader of the caper. And he doesn't want to delve into unfinished business with his old flame Pepsi.

They're going after big game: a yellow diamond worth \$30 million belonging to a rich lady named Tiffany and closely followed by the mysterious, and extremely dangerous, international fence Wei Hong. Since it's kept in a high security vault inside Tiffany's suite in a casino, the gangs converge in Macau and set their incredibly complex plan in action. Director Choi has a magician's touch in making the impossible seem vaguely plausible.

Technical work always hits the mark, with the musical score adding tension or ironic comment as needed.

Originally reviewed at the Busan Film Festival

Production Caper Film

Cast Kim Yun-seok, Kim Hye-soo, Lee Jung-jae, Gianna Jun, Simon Yam, Kim Hae-sook, Oh Dal-soo, Kim Soo-hyun, Derek Tsang, Lee Sin-je

Director Choi Dong-hoon

Sales Showbox/Mediaplex



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# The Girl

Abbie Cornish gives a tough but quietly penetrating performance in this original story of regret and redemption *By David Rooney*

**A**FTER FOCUSING ON THE hardships of undocumented Latino workers in New York City in his 1998 neo-realist drama *La Ciudad* (The City), writer-director David Riker returns to illegal immigration and the myth of the instantly attainable American Dream in *The Girl*, but this time as background to a more intimate, minor-key character portrait. Observed with a piercing eye for detail and a refined grasp of visual storytelling, the film's integrity is somewhat compromised by its narrative ellipses and slight turn toward sentimentality at the end. But Abbie Cornish's contained yet emotionally raw performance provides an affecting fulcrum that renders those flaws secondary.

Unlike many immigrant dramas, *The Girl* centers not on the difficulties of illegal aliens entering and surviving in the U.S. but on how the experiences of one such group touch Ashley (Cornish), a troubled young woman from Texas. Some might feel it crosses ethical lines to use the tragic circumstances of a Mexican family as a means to chart the redemption of a lost American character. But Riker's compassion is never in doubt, and the seriousness with which Ashley faces the

consequences of her actions is etched into every facet of Cornish's tightly wound performance.

Working in graceful synergy with cinematographer Martin Boege, Riker makes extensive use of close-ups to pin the psychological center of the drama firmly on Ashley. In short scenes with dialogue pared down to the minimum, we see her requesting a raise from her San Antonio supermarket employer and being told her attitude is holding her back. She is angry and confrontational with the foster mother who has temporary custody of her young son Georgie (Austin Wayne West) and is similarly resentful when social services makes an unscheduled visit at the mobile-home park where she lives. Via economical fragments of exposition, we learn that Child Protective Services removed Georgie from her care over alcoholism issues and that she has an upcoming court date in her bid to prove herself a fit parent.

Despite presenting her as sullen, resentful and closed-off to human contact, Cornish reveals the woman's sorrow even as she makes it clear that Ashley blames everyone but herself for her situation. It's this highly effective demonstration of internalized acting — Cornish's best work since



Cornish's botched attempt at muling leaves her caring for young Hernandez.

*Bright Star* — that stops the abrasive character from being unsympathetic.

With spare dialogue, we get a picture of Ashley's unhappy history: Her mother took off, and her semi-estranged father Tommy (Will Patton) is a big-rig truck driver who resists family ties. But after a surprise visit, he persuades her to take a trip with him to his home in Nuevo Laredo across the Mexican border, handing her a generous wad of cash, which he explains as "a lucky streak." En route back to Texas, Ashley discovers her father is a coyote, transporting illegal immigrants for \$500 a head. Tommy's attitude toward the uncertain future that awaits them is: "Walk

away. Never look back."

Watching the desperados hanging around the plaza in Nuevo Laredo hoping for a ticket north, Ashley sees a solution to her problems. Without her father's knowledge, she rounds up eight people and takes them to a low point of the Rio Grande to cross, arranging for them to hide out in a shack on the U.S. side until she comes to retrieve them.

Tense and suspenseful, this is the movie's most wrenching section, with Riker contemplating the human impact of borders on marginalized, desperate people from both sides. The disastrous crossing is played out offscreen, but the result leaves Ashley with a probably



Jones and Samberg are best friends who marry, divorce, then continue hang out — for a while.

## Celeste and Jesse Forever

Rashida Jones writes herself a leading role in a modestly scaled but funny relationship piece *By John DeFore*

**A**LIKABLE AND BITTERSWEET RELATIONSHIP FILM THAT DOESN'T telegraph its intentions, *Celeste and Jesse Forever* borrows tropes from the rom-com playbook and has enough laughs to be mistaken for one but ultimately doesn't want to be pigeonholed. Although not outrageous or star-powered enough to set the box office ablaze, it could connect with viewers who don't walk in expecting an extension of co-star Andy Samberg's *Saturday Night Live* antics.

Fans of Rashida Jones on *Parks and Recreation*, though, will find themselves on more familiar ground: Jones' Celeste, like her character there, is a highly competent professional who can't see straight in relationships. Having been married a few years to her longtime best friend Jesse (Samberg), she asks for a divorce after growing impatient with his lack of ambition. The two separate but continue to spend all their time together.

This comfy setup can't last, and when friends persuade Jesse to start dating, Celeste predictably takes it badly. Instead of setting Celeste on a familiar, *Awful Truth*-style sabotage campaign, though, the script (which Jones wrote with Will McCormack) becomes an uncomfortable journey of self-discovery for the character, who starts lousing up even the parts of her life she normally handles well.





orphaned young girl, Rosa (Maritza Santiago Hernandez), on her hands. Futile attempts to find the child's missing mother follow, until Ashley figures her only choice is to dump Rosa with Mexican authorities.

The narrative meanders a little as that difficult process advances, leaving too much time to wonder such things as how she got the girl back into Mexico without questions and how she manages to avoid being implicated while dealing with police, immigration officials and children's home supervisors. But Riker's melancholy, humanistic lyricism helps overcome these concerns. Even more so, the delicacy with which the bond develops between Ashley and Rosa

— from standoffishness to anger to begrudging acceptance, and eventually, to trust and love — makes the scenes dramatically persuasive.

While Cornish's Spanish is perhaps a little too clean and unaccented to be that of a working-class Texan, her performance is riveting, channeling an air of Jodie Foster in her English-language scenes. She plays Ashley's slow transition — from helplessness and selfish expediency to devastated culpability and hard-won self-knowledge — with a conviction that is no less stirring for being so understated. Riker gets a moving performance of complete naturalness and intensity from young Hernandez. Patton also etches a vivid character in his handful of scenes.

The director's only significant misstep is in the final reel, where after showing rigorous restraint and avoiding sentimentality for the duration, he gives into movie-ish emotional manipulation in a too-tidy wrap-up. But *The Girl* has enough strengths to make it haunting despite this.

*Originally reviewed at the Tribeca Film Festival*

**Production** *Journeyman Pictures, in association with Axiom Films, Sin Sentido Films, Bonita Films*

**Cast** *Abbie Cornish, Will Patton, Maritza Santiago Hernandez, Austin Wayne West, Annalee Jefferies, Luci Christian, Angeles Cruz, Isabel Sanchez Lara*

**Director-screenwriter** *David Riker*  
**Sales** *Goldcrest Films*

Jones is great in the part, even if this movie doesn't quite prove she should be carrying films on her own, and the actress makes her character's clumsy heartache feel like more than a plot point. Other story elements are less believable, like a subplot involving a sleazy young pop star (Emma Roberts), whose career and personal life suddenly intersect with Celeste's, but director Lee Toland Krieger keeps things light enough that a touch of implausibility won't bother many viewers.

Samberg is highly sympathetic, playing things much straighter than usual; if he and Jones don't have much chemistry that's only to the benefit of the friends-not-lovers theme.

*Originally reviewed at the Sundance Film Festival*

**Production Companies** *Team Todd, Envision Media Arts*

**Cast** *Rashida Jones, Andy Samberg, Chris Messina, Ari Graynor, Emma Roberts, Elijah Wood, Eric Christian Olsen*

**Director** *Lee Toland Krieger*

**Screenwriters** *Rashida Jones, Will McCormack*

**Producers** *Jennifer Todd, Suzanne Todd, Lee Nelson*

**Executive producers** *Rashida Jones, Will McCormack*

**Director of photography** *David Lanzenberg*

**Production designer** *Ian Phillips*

**Music** *Sunny Levine, Zach Cowie*

**Costume designer** *Julia Caston*

**Sales** *Sierra/Affinity*

## MARKET SCREENING GUIDE



### TODAY

**8:45** *The Silent War* Mei Ah Entertainment Group Ltd., Fairmont 1

**9:00** *Bwakaw* Fortissimo Films, Broadway 4; *Fly Me to the Moon* Kinology, AMC 1; *Free Samples* Red Sea Media Inc., Fairmont 3; *Imagine* Beta Cinema, Criterion 1; *Inhuman Resources* Darclight Films, Fairmont 5; *Jelly T* Sola Media Gmbh, Criterion 2; *Miffy the Movie* 6 Sales, Laemmle 3; *Peace in Rio* Cinema Do Brasil, Fairmont 2; *Roman Polanski: Odd Man Out* Films Distribution, Criterion 5; *Soliloquizing Man* China Film, Promotion Int'l; Merigot 1 *The Art of Flight (3D)* Red Bull Media House, AMC 5; *The Brass Teapot* TF1 International, Broadway 3; *The Greatest Miracle* Locomotive Distribution, AMC 7; *The Letter* Bleiberg Entertainment LLC., Fairmont 4; *The Man Who Laughs* Europacorp, Criterion 4; *White Frog* Fortissimo Films, Criterion 6

**11:00** *12 Dogs of Christmas II* Vision Films, Fairmont 4; Afterparty Film Factory Entertainment, AMC 4; *Beta Cinema Promo Reel* Beta Cinema, Laemmle 4; *Blancanieves* DreAMCatcher, Broadway 2; *Dark Power* Spotlight Pictures, Broadway 1; *Do Not Disturb* TF1 International, AMC 3; *Errors of the Human Body* MPI Media Group, Broadway 3; *For Greater Glory* Locomotive Distribution, AMC 2; *Full Circle* Fortissimo Films, Fairmont 1; *Operation E* Deaplaneta, Laemmle 1; *Revenge for Jolly!* Highland Film Group, Laemmle 2; *Soulbound* Cinema Do Brasil, Fairmont 3; *Southern Stars* Reel Flow, Fairmont 2; *Steel* Films Distribution, Criterion 6; *Synevir*, Red Sea Media Inc., AMC 1; *Taichi Hero* Huayi Brothers Media Corp., AMC 5; *The Hot Flashes* Lightning Entertainment, Criterion 2; *Welcome to the Jungle* Salt, AMC 6; *What About Love* Quality Films, Fairmont 5; *Where I Belong* East-west Filmdistribution Gmbh, AMC 7; *Yellow* Atlas International Film

Gmbh, Laemmle 3; *Young at Heart* China Film Promotion International, Merigot 1; *Zaytoun* Pathe International (Fr), Criterion 3

**13:00** *AE/Autoexposure* Cinema Do Brasil, Fairmont 3; *Armed Hands* Films Distribution, Criterion 2; *Fin (The End)* Film Factory Entertainment, Broadway 2; *For Greater Glory* Locomotive Distribution, AMC 2; *How to Make Money Selling Drugs* Lightning Entertainment, Broadway 1; *Miss Lovely* Fortissimo Films, Criterion 3; *Outrage Beyond* Celluloid Dreams/Nightmares, Laemmle 4; *Queens of Country* Red Sea Media Inc., Fairmont 2; *Seven Boxes* Shoreline Entertainment, Fairmont 5; *Sleeping Around* Red Sea Media Inc., Fairmont 4; *Stealing Roses* Worldwide Film Entertainment LLC., Merigot 1; *Sweet Candy Peach* Big Screen Entertainment Group, Fairmont 1; *The Lookout* StudioCanal, AMC 6; *The Numbers Station* Content Media Corp. Plc, AMC 7; *Tricked* FCCC Distribution, AMC 1

**15:00** *An End to Killing* Fortissimo Films, AMC 4; *Branded* Darclight Films, AMC 6; *Camille Rewinds* Gaumont, AMC 5; *Frances Ha* Celluloid Dreams/Nightmares, Criterion 3; *Generation P* Roskino, AMC 3; *Girls Always on the Right Side* China Film Promotion International, Merigot 1; *Hellbenders 3D* The Exchange, Criterion 1; *Hotel Noir* Locomotive Distribution, Fairmont 5; *My Awkward Sexual Adventure* Archstone Distribution, Fairmont 1; *Run — 3D* Palatin Media Film & Fernseh Gmbh, AMC 7; *Shores of Hope* Beta Cinema, Criterion 4; *The Girl and Death* Fcce Distribution, AMC 1; *The Uprising* Cinema Do Brasil, Fairmont 3; *Trade of Innocents* Worldwide Film Entertainment LLC., Fairmont 2; *Viy 3D* (Promo) Bazelevs, Broadway 3; *Wu Dang* Mei Ah Entertainment Group Limited, Fairmont 4

**17:00** *Searching for Sonny* Red Sea Media Inc., Merigot 1 **VIII**





Warren Beatty escorts Natalie Wood — both of whom starred in Elia Kazan's *Splendor in the Grass* in 1961 — through a crowd of photographers to the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, home of the 34th Annual Academy Awards. Wood was nominated for best actress but lost to Sophia Loren, who took home the statuette for Vittorio De Sica's *Two Women*.

The Santa Monica Civic takes center stage as the Oscars move West

AS THE 1960S BEGAN, the Oscars left Hollywood and moved to Santa Monica. All through the '50s, the Academy Awards had been held at the Pantages Theatre, but in 1961, a few years after the 3,000-seat Santa Monica Civic Auditorium was completed, the telecast moved west and stayed there through 1968. Most of the Oscarcasts were emceed by Bob Hope, who had a strange night in 1962. While Shelley Winters was preparing to present the cinematography awards (in those days there were two awards: one for color, one for black and white), a New York cab driver named Stan Berman came onstage and said, “Ladies and gentlemen, I’m the world’s greatest gatecrasher, and I just came here to present Bob Hope with his 1938 trophy.” He then handed Winters a homemade miniature Oscar, said “this is for Bob” and exited the stage. Hope’s line when it was over: “Who needs Price Waterhouse? All we need is a doorman.” — BILL HIGGINS



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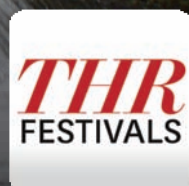
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